

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY

June 10, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR DIRECTOR, [REDACTED] 25X1A
DIRECTOR, [REDACTED]

SUBJECT: Future Needs for U-2 Aircraft

Reference is made to my memorandum of 22 March, subject as above. Although the [REDACTED] Budget Estimate for FY 1966 and subsequent years proposes the procurement of new U-2 aircraft, any decision to reopen a limited production line for that purpose must be completely justifiable. 25X1A

Pending receipt of the joint study requested in my referenced memorandum, the NRO Staff analyzed in some depth aircraft utilization rates of the U-2 fleet. This analysis indicates that the current operational effort can be supported comfortably with considerably fewer aircraft than are presently assigned.

In view of the number of aircraft available and their utilization rates, the ever increasing vulnerability of the U-2 to air defenses, and current and projected other assets capable of acquiring high resolution photography, I have not been convinced of the desirability of producing additional U-2's. Unless your joint study clearly indicates otherwise, I propose to implement the following program:

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- 25X1C
1. Allow the [REDACTED] fleet to reduce via attrition to seven aircraft. This level will support one aircraft on bailment to Lockheed, another in IRAN at all times, and two operational detachments at Edwards and [REDACTED] respectively.
 2. Modify SAC U-2's to the general IDEALIST configuration (J-75 engines, sensors, defensive equipment, etc) at a rate of 2/3 per year, beginning in FY 66.

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3. Allow the SAC U-2 fleet to reduce to seven aircraft via attrition and/or the provision of replacement aircraft to [REDACTED]

4. Combine the U-2 assets into one unit when the total number of operational U-2's is reduced to approximately 12.

The joint study requested in my 22 March memorandum should be submitted as soon as possible. In addition, at that time, your concurrence or comments on the above program proposal and/or your alternative plan is also desired.

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[REDACTED]
✓ Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

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